(b) The demands interalia relate to the implementation/modification of the recommendations of the 5th Pay Commission and to the seeking of improvements/ modifications in the restructuring scheme introduced by the Department of Telecom in the year 1990.

(c) Yes Sir. Agreement to withdraw the notice of strike has been signed with three employees Federations including Bhartiya Telecom Employees Federation.

(d) The issues pertained to immediate implementation of certain recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission, removal of certain anomalies in the pay structure of a few categories of employees and promotional prospects for some cadres employed in new technologies. The Employees Federations were assured that while some of the issues will be settled within the Telecom Commission, others would be taken up at the appropriate levels of the Government.

Telephone Facility to Gram Panchayats in Gujarat

15. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had fixed any targets to provide telephone facility to Gram Panchayats in Gujarat during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof; year-wise and district-wise;

(c) whether it is a fact that action for achieving these targets is so far very tardy;

(d) if so, the details thereof and reasons for the tardy implementation; and

(e) the action Government propose to take. to accelerate th eachievement of targets for providing telephones to Gram Panchayats in the State?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) There was no target fixed for Gram Panchayats. However, targets were fixed for providing Public Telephones in the Villages.

(b) As per details given in Statement (*See below*).

(c) and (d) There are shortfalls in achievements of targets of 1995-96 & 1996-97 due to non-supply of equipments.

(e) The left-over No. 4202 No. of villages is likely to be provided with a telephone facility by the private basis service operator as per terms of the licence agreement, during 1998-99.

Statement

Circle-wise and District-wise Target and Achievement to provide Telephone facility to Villages in the State of Gujarat

Sl. No.	Name of District	1994-95		1995-96		1996-97	
		Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement
1.	Ahmedabad	170	135	40	7	66	4
2.	Gandhinagar	29	29	—	—	—	—
3.	Amreli	186	127	55	24	70	10
4.	Banaskantha	235	89	100	57	400	34
5.	Bharuch	186	141	—	—	300	11
6.	Bhavnagar	445	292	80	15	137	21

Sl. No.	Name of District	1994-95		1995-96		1996-97	
		Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement
7.	Jamnagar	294	199	90	29	113	11
8.	Janagagar	421	232	260	43	200	56
9.	Kheda	—	—	45	—	77	—
10.	Kutch-Bhuj	156	50	30	21	300	18
11.	Mehsana	168	113	60	4	143	10
12.	Panchmahal	563	245	90	35	475	86
13.	Rajkot	328	240	60	20	93	43
14.	Sabarkantha	33	28	245	7	392	3
15.	Surendranagar	76	76	—	—	3	—
16.	Surat	424	232	350	19	300	42
17.	Vadodara	387	200	95	15	479	13
18.	Valsad	279	139	300	5	300	35
19.	Dang	50	41	60	5	100	2
20.	Union Territories	5	—	40	.2	52	1
		4435	2608	2000	308	4000	400

Late Delivery of Letters from Post Offices

16. PROF. RAM KAPSE: will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the complaints from general public regarding delayed delivery/non-delivery/ wrong delivery of letters etc. to the public from Post Offices;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the action taken/proposed to be taken by Government to avoid such complaints?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) Generally mails are delivered as per norms yet there have been occasional complaints about delay/non-delivery/wrong delivery of letters etc. Such complaints are nearly 0.00010% of the total volume of traffic handled by the Department.

(b) Various factors contribute to such occasional delays. Some of these are;

(i) Cancellation and late running of trains/buses/planes;

(ii) natural calamities like floods, landslides etc.;

(iii) fast development of new habitats in urban conglomerations;

(c) The Department has taken following steps to improve the transmission and delivery of mails.

(i) Close coordination with the Railway/State Transport/Airlines authorities;

(ii) Mechanised sorting of mails in two Metro cities at Bombay/Madras;

(iii) Introduction of new premium and time bound services like speed Post, Hybrid Mail, Express Parcel Service etc.,

(iv) Monitoring of mail movement and mail processing at various levels, testing of mail efficiency by posting test letters and periodical check of transit time of live mail;

(v) To improve delivery of mails in Metro cities, specially in multi-storeyed buildings, the residents have been advised to put their personal letter boxes at the ground floor;